

E. H. Dance and G. P. Dartford

MALAYAN AND WORLD HISTORY

BOOK 3



MALAYA
& THE MODERN
WORLD





PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

Malayan and World History

Book III

MALAYA
AND THE MODERN
WORLD

BY

E. H. DANCE, M.A., AND
G.P. DARTFORD, B.A.

*With Illustrations
and Maps*



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PREFACE

This book is the third in a series intended for Forms 1, 2, and 3 in the secondary schools in Malaya. Insularity in history teaching has gone the way of insularity in foreign policy, and Malaysians, who have been influenced by contacts with different peoples from all over the world, have a particular need for a broad knowledge of the history both of the East and the West. The main theme, therefore, is the History of the World; but as Malaya is an Asian country special prominence has been given to the history of Asian countries closely connected with Malaya.

At the end of each chapter there is a Source Reading, and it is hoped that these, as well as the illustrations, will be useful, not only for their interest, but also as teaching material. The Exercises are based directly on the reading matter and the illustrations, except that the Questions in Section "B" need some independent work other than mere preparation from the text-book.

The book covers the suggested new syllabus for Form 3 in the secondary schools in the Federation of Malaya, and provides some additional material useful as a background.

E.H.D. *and g.p.d.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Changing World

In this book you will learn something about the very important events which have taken place, in Malaya and the world, during the two hundred years since the middle of the eighteenth century. Never in the history of the human race has the pace of change been faster, and one of the most important results of this has been to bring all the countries of the world closer together. There is no longer a New World and an Old World, an eastern world and a western world, but just *one* world in which we are all dependent on each other.

Just think of some of the things which make up our ordinary life. We have a great rubber industry supplying a large part of the world's needs for that important product. We see giant dredges digging up the land for tin. We travel by bus and car on metalled roads, by train, or by aeroplanes which take us from one end of Malaya to the other in a few hours. Every day most of us use such modern conveniences as piped water and electricity. If we want to communicate with our friends, we can post a letter, send a telegram, or speak to them on the telephone. Then there are hospitals for the sick, schools for the children, and shops where we can buy all kinds of food and manufactured goods from all over the world. Nor should we forget such things for our entertainment as the cinema and the radio. No wonder that we are proud that our country is one of the most modern and advanced in Asia.

Yet it is sometimes hard to realise that two hundred years ago in Malaya there were none of these things that play such a great part in our modern life; in fact most of them have come in the last fifty or one hundred years. Nearly all these things were developed in the West, in Europe and America, as a result of what is called the Industrial Revolution. In this book you will learn something about these developments and how they were brought to Malaya.

Living as we do at one of the great crossroads of the world, Malayans have been influenced by many different peoples and by events which happened far away in other parts of the globe. To understand our own history and what is happening in the world today we must know much about these countries and their history, though they may seem far away to us.

You need only open a newspaper and read the world news to see how important to everyone are the giant powers of the United States and Russia today. Yet both these countries have risen to their great position during the last two centuries. We shall learn how the little British colonies stretched along the east coast of North America two hundred years ago have become the wealthiest nation that the world has ever known. And we shall see how Peter the Great first made the landlocked and barbaric kingdom of Russia into a power in the affairs of Europe, which under Lenin and Stalin has become the first Communist state.

Linked with the United States in the world today are Britain and France, and it is from these three countries that we have learnt most of our democratic ideas. Modern democracy may be said to have been started by the American and French Revolutions. The United States was also the first great example of a federation on a large scale, and this is the type of constitution we have adopted in the unification



of Malaya. From Britain we have learnt many things, but one of the most important is the system of parliamentary government which Malaya, like the other countries of the Commonwealth, has adopted from Britain. It is most important that we should know how these things developed in Britain and France. As Malaya is a Commonwealth nation, we also need to know how Britain's Empire has been changed into a partnership of free peoples.

In the present century we have experienced two disastrous World Wars which have influenced the lives of all of us to some extent. In both of these Germany was the principal enemy of the Commonwealth, and Italy played an important part, as an ally in the first and as an enemy in the second. Yet these two countries were brought into being, less than a hundred years ago, by the uniting of many small states. In this book we shall read about how they were united, and how they were largely responsible for the two World Wars.

Important as these countries are in world affairs, Malaya owes at least as much of her culture to the two great countries of Asia, India, and China, from which the ancestors of so many Malaysians have come. We need to know how India was conquered and united by the British, and how, with Pakistan, it has become independent in our own day. At the same time China has changed from an old-fashioned and isolated empire into a modern state, organised like Russia on the Communist model. These developments are probably as important for the future as anything else which has happened in recent times.

Finally, Malaya has shared with the other countries of Asia in the great awakening of national feeling that has led to the independence of so many lands during the last twenty years. So in this book we shall read about the growth of the great



empires of the western world, and the new power of modern Japan, and how they ruled over so much of Asia. Then in the last chapter we shall see how one by one these peoples of Asia have thrown off foreign rule and become the independent states that we see on the map today.

CHAPTER ONE

Malaya in the Eighteenth Century

Before we turn to the great changes in the West during the last two centuries, let us see what was happening in Malaya in the eighteenth century. First of all, we must realise that the population was very small indeed, probably not more than 250,000, or less than the number of people in Kuala Lumpur today. The Aborigines were living in the forests very much as they do today. The rest of the population was nearly all either Malay or similar Malaysian peoples, who had come to the peninsula from the islands of Indonesia in quite recent times. The population was concentrated in small villages, either on the coast, where the people could fish, trade, and sometimes indulge in piracy, or on the main rivers, which provided the only easy means of communication. Few, except the Aborigines, lived far from the patches of flat land on the coast or in the river valleys where rice could be grown. The only towns, in the modern sense, were the European-ruled settlements of Malacca and Penang; and here only were found the mixture of races—Malay, Chinese, Indian, Eurasian, and European—which we find in Malaya today.

Except in Malacca and Penang, government was a very personal thing, dependent on the duties and rights of peasants, chiefs, and rulers. When we speak of “states” in eighteenth-century Malaya, we should think not of an *area* with an organised government, centred in a capital and reaching out as far as fixed boundaries, but rather of a number of

people, who, through their local chiefs, owed loyalty to a greater chief or Sultan. As a rule the greater chief lived near the mouth of a large river, where he was better able to control the lesser chiefs of the valleys in the interior, and so to be acknowledged as a ruler over all the river basin. That is why the names of most of the Malay states are the same as that of their principal river.

The Johore Sultanate

The actual size of the state naturally depended very much on the personality of the ruler, and his power to enforce his authority over the chiefs. Generally, however, the Malays were very loyal to the ruler, who as Sultan was also the head of the Muslim religion in the state. This loyalty did not depend only on where the Sultan lived, and there were many cases of princes, driven out of one place, who were able to rally their supporters in another centre. So a son of the last Sultan of Malacca became the first ruler of Perak. But perhaps the best example was that of the descendants of the same Malacca Sultan who became Sultans of Johore. For long after Malacca fell they were still acknowledged as the overlords of all the southern part of Malaya outside the territory of Malacca, in spite of the fact that they were constantly driven from one place to another by their enemies.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the strength of the Johore Sultanate had been very much reduced. The Malacca royal family in Johore died out in 1699, and the title of Sultan had passed to the family of the Bendaharas, who had long been the power behind the throne. In 1718 a Menangkabau adventurer, Raja Kechil, from Siak in Sumatra, seized Johore, deposed and later murdered the Sultan Abdul Jalil, and ruled in his place for four years. In 1722, Abdul Jalil's son, Sulaiman, took Rhio, where Raja Kechil had

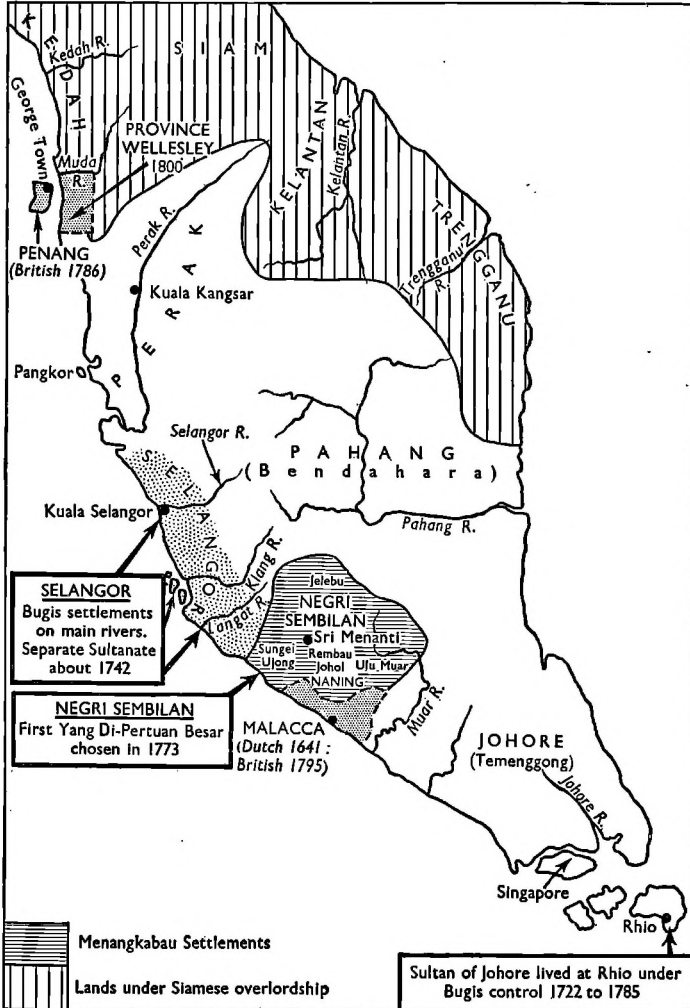


Fig. 1. Malaya at the end of the eighteenth century

moved the capital, and recovered the throne of Johore with the aid of a band of Bugis adventurers.

The Bugis

The allies whom Sulaiman had called in soon proved to be his masters. Originally from the island of the Celebes, the Bugis at this time were the most active traders and fighters in the whole of the East Indies. At Rhio they set up one of their leaders as Under-king with complete control of the Sultan

Other bands sailed up the Straits of Malacca and settled at the mouths of the Klang and Selangor Rivers. Here a Bugis chief, Raja Lumu, became the first independent Sultan of Selangor in about 1742. This is the beginning of Selangor as a separate state, and the present Sultan is a descendant of this Bugis leader.

Farther north the Bugis invaded Perak and Kedah, taking sides in civil wars in those states. The Malays called to their aid Raja Kechil of Siak, who became their champion until his death in 1746. When at length the Bugis left these states, so much damage had been done that it took them long to recover.

Negri Sembilan

Meanwhile another part of the dominions of the Sultan of Johore was passing out of his control. This was *Negri Sembilan*, the group of small states to the north of Malacca. For a long time settlers from Menangkabau in Sumatra had been coming to this region and to Nanning on the borders of Malacca. They brought with them many customs for the election of chiefs and the *matriarchal* system, by which land was held by the women and descended from mother to daughter. During the wars between the Bugis and Raja Kechil the chiefs of Negri

Sembilan supported the Menangkabau leader, and it was fear of Bugis' attacks that caused them to draw closer together for self-defence. The Sultan of Johore, their old overlord, was powerless to protect them, and in 1773 they took the important step of choosing a certain Raja Melewar to be the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of their nine states. He was chosen by the undangs or chiefs of the four principal states, as his successors have been ever since. He took up his residence at

Sri Menanti, still the royal seat today. From this time Negri Sembilan became an independent confederation of states. The Yang di-Pertuan Besar has never had quite the same authority as the Sultan of a unified state, and when he takes an important step, such as signing a treaty, the agreement of the undangs is necessary. The Menangkabaus of Naning remained outside Negri Sembilan because of the Dutch

claim that they were subject to Malacca.

Malacca under the Dutch

While these events were taking place, the Dutch were ruling quietly over the town and fort of Malacca and its surrounding territory, which they had captured from the Portuguese in 1641. The governor and other officials were appointed by the Dutch East India Company. As merchants, they were interested in orderly, economical government. Malacca had long ceased to be very important as a centre of trade, but the Dutch kept it for strategic reasons as a vital base on the Straits. The Dutch Company tried to force all the ships, passing through the Straits to call at Malacca, but one result of this was that many avoided this route altogether. As far as the rest of Malaya was concerned, the Dutch were chiefly interested in securing as much of the tin exported from Selangor, Perak, and Kedah as they could. For this purpose, they made treaties with the rulers of these states and

established small forts at Kuala Selangor, at the mouth of the Perak River, and on the island of Pangkor.¹ In spite of these efforts they were not very successful in controlling the export of tin because it could be smuggled out from so many places.

Raja Haji

The wars of the Bugis, both in Malaya and Sumatra, upset all the Dutch plans for controlling the trade of the Straits. Johore had formerly been an ally and had helped the Dutch to take Malacca. But now the Sultan of Johore was himself a puppet of the Bugis Under-king at Rhio. In 1777 Raja Haji, the most famous of all the Bugis warriors and the brother of the first Sultan of Selangor, became the Under-king at Rhio, and soon a quarrel broke out between him and the Dutch. First the Dutch made an unsuccessful attack on Rhio. Then, encouraged by this victory, the Bugis chief called on all his fellow-countrymen to join in a united attack on Malacca itself. The old fort was no longer as important as a centre of trade but the Dutch had held on to it so that no enemy might make use of it.

In 1784 the Bugis dosed in on the famous fortress. Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor brought the Bugis of that state to the northern suburbs of the town, while his uncle, Raja Haji himself, landed with a large army a few miles to the south. As the Dutch garrison prepared for a siege, reinforcements arrived in six ships from Batavia just in time to turn the tide.

The Dutch attacked Raja Haji's army at Telok Ketapang, five miles from Malacca. Unfortunately for the Bugis, Raja Haji was killed while urging on his men, and after a hard fight the Dutch won the day. As a result Malacca was saved and the Bugis were expelled from Rhio by a Dutch expedition. For the Sultan of Johore this meant only a change of masters,

¹ The remains of the K. Selangor and Pangkor forts can still be seen.

for he was compelled to place himself under Dutch protection and to accept a Dutch Resident and garrison.

The Bendaharas and the Temenggongs

While the Sultan of Johore was thus left helpless in Rhio, his last possessions on the mainland of Malaya were passing out of his control and under the actual rule of two of his great officers of state. The Bendahara settled himself at the mouth of the Pahang River, where he could best make his influence felt on the chiefs of this river basin. At the end of the eighteenth century also, the Temenggong made his headquarters on Singapore Island and ruled as far as was possible over the southern part of Malaya which forms the modern state of Johore. As time went on these two officials became cut off more and more from the Sultan living at Rhio, and eventually their descendants became the modern rulers of Pahang and Johore.

The Northern States

The rulers of Kelantan and Trengganu, who once had also been under the overlordship of Johore, were now falling more under Siam. These states were very much cut off from the rest of Malaya and played little part in the developments which were taking place on the east coast.

The Sultan of Kedah (who then ruled Perlis as well) was also regarded as being under Siamese overlordship in the eighteenth century, and in addition suffered from the attacks of the Bugis. In 1821 the Siamese invaded Kedah and drove the Sultan into exile. From this time until 1909 they kept a closer control of this state. Although the Sultan was allowed to return in 1842 to Kedah, Perlis became a separate state with its own Raja at this time.

